

Shall the People Rule, Keynote of Mr. Bryan's Speech of Acceptance

HAVE DECLARED IN PLATFORM FOR WHAT THEY STAND

Nominee Approves Instrument Which Outlines All Legislation to Be Hoped for.

LINCOLN, NEB., August 12.—In his speech accepting the Democratic nomination for President, William J. Bryan discusses briefly, but directly the leading issues of the campaign, declares himself in perfect accord with every feature of the platform of the party, and severely arraigns the Republican party for its shortcomings and false promises. Mr. Bryan said:

Mr. Clayton and Gentlemen of the Notification Committee: I cannot accept the nomination which you officially tender, without first acknowledging my deep indebtedness to the Democratic party for the extraordinary honor which it has conferred upon me. Having twice before been a candidate for the presidency, in campaigns which ended in defeat, a third nomination, the result of the free and voluntary act of the voters of the party, can only be explained by a substantial and undisputed growth in the principles and policies for which I, with a multitude of others, have contended. As these principles and policies have given me whatever political strength I possess, the action of the convention not only renews my faith in them, but strengthens my attachment to them.

A Platform Is Binding.
I shall, in the near future, prepare a more formal reply to your notification, and, in that letter of acceptance, will deal with the platform in detail. It is sufficient at this time, to assure you that I am in hearty accord with both the letter and the spirit of the platform. I indorse it in whole and in part, and shall, if elected, regard its declarations as binding upon me. And, I may add, a platform is binding as to what it omits as well as to what it contains. According to the Democratic idea, the people think for themselves and select officials to carry out their wishes. The voters are the sovereigns; the officials are the servants, employed for a fixed time and at a stated salary, to do what the sovereigns want done, and to do it in the way the sovereigns want it done. Platforms are entirely in harmony with this Democratic idea.

A platform announces the party's position on the issues which are at issue, and an official is not at liberty to use the authority vested in him to urge personal views which have not been submitted to the voters for their approval. If one is nominated upon a platform which is not satisfactory to him, he must either decline the nomination, or, in accepting it, propose an amended platform in lieu of the one adopted by the convention. No such situation, however, confronts your candidate, for the platform upon which I was nominated, and which I dissent, but I specifically outline all the remedial legislation which we can hope to secure during the next four years.

Republican Challenge Accepted.
The distinguished statesman who received the Republican nomination for President said in his notification speech: "The strength of the Republican cause in the campaign at hand is the fact that we represent the policies essential to the reform of known abuses, to the continuance of liberty and true prosperity, and that we are determined to maintain them and carry them on."

In the name of the Democratic party, I accept the challenge, and charge that the Republican party is responsible for the "known abuses" which now exist in the Federal government, and that it is impotent to accomplish the reforms which are imperatively needed. Further, I cannot concur in the statement that the Republican platform unequivocally declares for the reforms that are essential to the country. I affirm that it openly and notoriously disappoints the hopes and expectations of reformers, whether those reformers be Republicans or Democrats.

So far did the Republican convention in short of its duty that the Republican candidate felt it necessary to add to his platform in several important particulars, thus rebuking the leaders of the party, upon whose co-operation he must rely for the enactment of remedial legislation.

As I shall, in separate speeches, discuss the leading questions at issue, I shall at this time confine myself to the paramount question, and to the far-reaching purpose of our party, as that purpose is set forth in the platform.

Shall the People Rule.

Our platform declares that the overshadowing issue which manifests itself in all the questions now under discussion, is "Shall the people rule?" No matter what the issue, either in regard to what subject we address ourselves, the same question confronts us: Shall the people control their own government, and use that government for the protection of their rights and for the promotion of their welfare, or shall the representatives of predatory wealth prey upon a defenseless public, while the offenders secure immunity from subversive officials whom they raise to power by unscrupulous methods? This is the issue raised by the "known abuses" to which Mr. Taft refers.

President's Indictment Against the Party.

In a message sent to Congress last January, President Taft declared: "The attacks by these great corporations on the administration's actions have been given a wide circulation throughout the country, in the newspapers and otherwise, by those writers and speakers who, consciously or unconsciously, act as the representatives of predatory wealth—of the wealth accumulated on a giant scale by all forms of iniquity, ranging from the oppression of wage-earners to unfair and unwholesome methods of crushing competition, and to defrauding the public by stock-jobbing and the manipulation of securities. Certain wealthy men of this stamp, whose conduct should be abhorrent to every man of ordinary conscience, and who commit the hideous wrong of teaching our young men that phenomenal business success must ordinarily be based on dishonesty, have, during the last few months, made it apparent that they have banded together to work for a reaction. Their endeavor is

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to overthrow and discredit all who honestly administer the law, to prevent any additional legislation which would check or restrain them, and to secure, if possible, a freedom from all restraint which will permit every unscrupulous wrongdoer to do what he wishes unchecked, provided he has enough money." What an arraignment of the predatory interests!

Is the President's indictment true? And, if true, against whom was it directed? Not against the Democratic party.

Mr. Taft Indorses the Indictment.

Mr. Taft says that these evils have crept in during the last ten years. He declares that during this time some prominent and influential members of the community spurred by financial success and in their hurry for greater wealth, became unmindful of the common rules of business honesty and fidelity, and of the limitations imposed by law upon their actions, and that "the revelations of the branches of trusts, the disclosures as to rebates and discriminations by railroads, the accumulating evidence of the violations of the anti-trust laws, by a number of corporations, and the over-issue of stocks and bonds of interstate railroads for the unlawful enriching of directors and for the purpose of concentrating the control of the railroads under one management"—all these, he charges, "quickened the conscience of the people and brought on a moral awakening."

During all this time, I beg to remind you, Republican officials presided in the executive department, filled the Cabinet, dominated the Senate, controlled the House of Representatives, and occupied most of the Federal judiciary. Four years ago the Republican platform boastfully declared that since 1860—with the exception of two years—the Republican party had been in control of part or of all the branches of the Federal government; that for two years only was the Democratic party in a position to either enact or repeal a law. Having drawn the salaries; having enjoyed the honors; having secured the prestige, let the Republican party accept the responsibility!

Republican Party Responsible.

Why were these "known abuses" permitted to develop? Why have they not been corrected? If existing laws are sufficient, why have they not been enforced? All of the executive machinery of the Federal government is in the hands of the Republican party. Are new laws necessary? Why have they not been enacted? With a Republican President to recommend, with a Republican Senate and House to carry out his recommendations, why does the Republican candidate plead for further time in which to do what should have been done long ago? Can Mr. Taft promise to be more strenuous in the prosecution of wrongdoers than the present executive? Can he ask for a larger majority in the Senate than his party now has? Does he need more Republicans in the House of Representatives or a Speaker with more unlimited authority?

Why No Tariff Reform?

The President's close friends have been promising for several years that he would attack the iniquities of the tariff. We have had intimation that Mr. Taft was under the demands of the highly protected industries. And yet the interests of the manufacturers, who have for twenty-five years contributed to the Republican campaign fund, and who in return have framed the tariff schedules, has been sufficient to prevent tariff reform. As the present campaign approached, both the President and Mr. Taft declared in favor of tariff revision, but set the date of revision after the election.

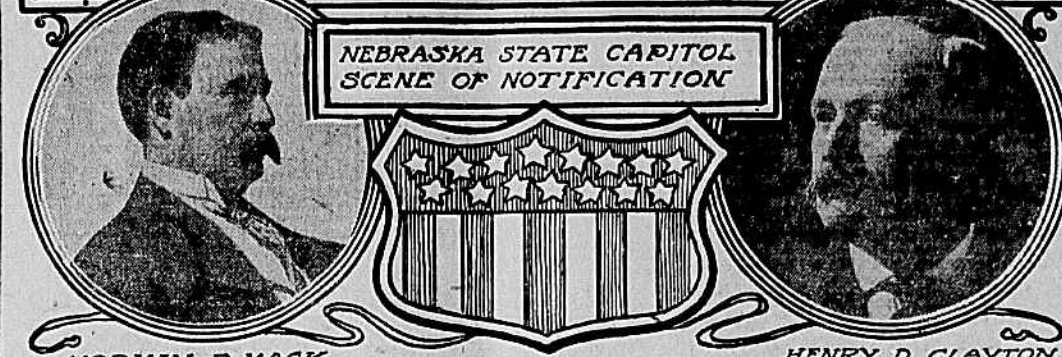
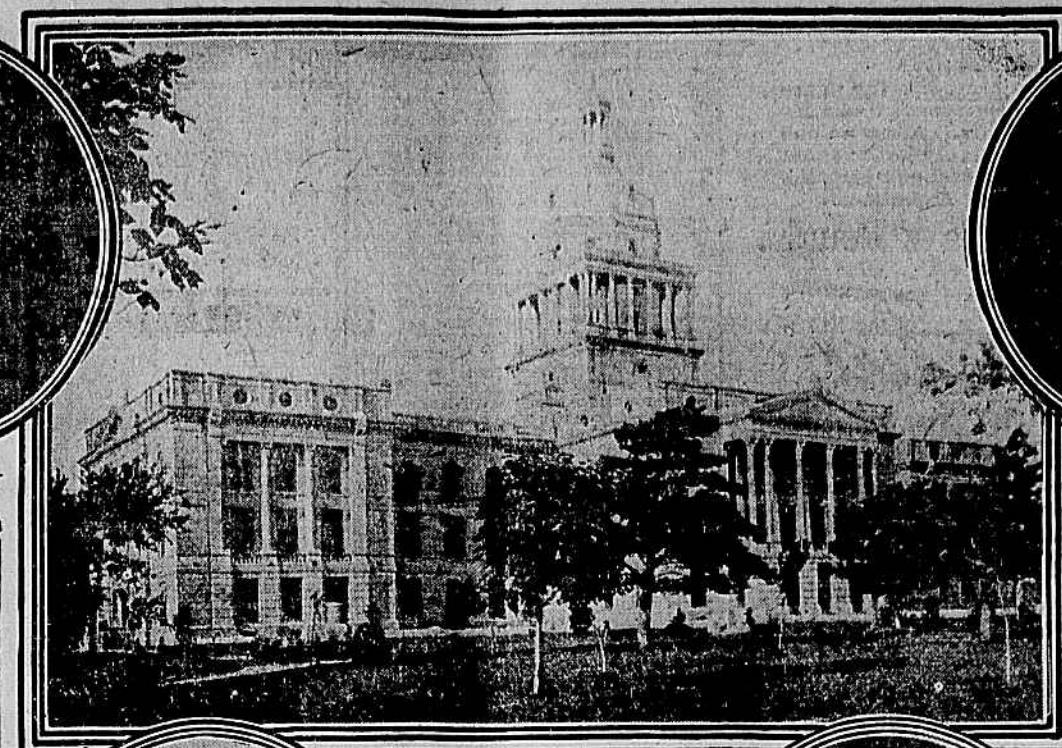
But the pressure brought to bear by the protected interests has been great enough to prevent any attempt at tariff reform before the election, and the reduction promised after the election is as hedged about with qualifying phrases that no one can estimate with accuracy the sum total of tariff reform to be expected in case of Republican success. If the past can be taken as a guide, the Republican party will be as obliging to the beneficiaries of contributions to the beneficiaries of protection as to make that party powerless to bring to the country any material relief from the present tariff burdens.

Why No Anti-Trust Legislation?

A few years ago the Republican leaders in the House of Representatives were coerced by public opinion into the support of an anti-trust law, which had the endorsement of the President, but the Senate refused even to consider the measure, and since that time no effort has been made by the dominant party to secure remedial legislation upon this subject.

Why No Railroad Legislation?

For ten years the Interstate Commerce Commission has been asking for an enlargement of its powers, that it might prevent rebates and discriminations, but a Republican Senate and Republican House of Representatives were unmoved by its entreaties. In 1906 the Republican National Convention was urged to indorse the demand for railway legislation, but its platform was silent on the subject. Even in 1904 the convention gave no pledge to remedy these abuses. When the President finally asked for legislation, he drew his inspiration from three Democratic national platforms, and he received more cordial support from the Democrats than from the Republicans. The Republican in the Senate deliberately defeated several amendments offered by Senator La Follette, and supported by the Democrats—amendments embodying legislation asked by the Interstate Commerce Commission. One of these amendments authorized the ascertainment of the value of railroads. This amendment was not only defeated by the Senate, but it was overwhelmingly rejected by the recent Republican National Convention, and the Republican candidate



NORMAN E. MACK HENRY D. CLAYTON

has sought to rescue his party from the disastrous results of this act by expressing himself, in a qualified way, in favor of ascertaining the value of the railroads.

Overissue of Stocks and Bonds.
Mr. Taft complains of the overissue of stocks and bonds of railroads, "for the unlawful enriching of directors and for the purpose of concentrating the control of the railroads under one management," and the complaint is well founded. But, with a President to point out the evil, and a Republican Congress to correct it, we find nothing done for the protection of the public. Why?

My honorable opponent has, by his confession, relieved me of the necessity of furnishing proof; he admits the condition and he cannot avoid the logical conclusion that must be drawn from the admission. There is no doubt whatever that a large majority of the voters of the Republican party recognize the deplorable situation which Mr. Taft describes; they recognize that the

masses have had but little influence upon legislation or upon the administration of the government, and they are beginning to understand the cause. For a generation, the Republican party has drawn its campaign funds from the beneficiaries of special legislation. Privileges have been pledged and granted in return for money contributed to defray the expenses of the party. When official authority is turned over to the representatives of those who first furnish the sinews of war and then reimburse themselves out of the pockets of the tax-payers?

Fasting in Wilderness Necessary.
So long as the Republican party remains in power, it is powerless to regenerate itself. It cannot attack wrong-doing in high places without disgracing many of its prominent members, and it, therefore, uses opiates instead of the surgeon's knife. Its malefactors construe each Republican victory as an endorsement of their conduct and threaten the party with defeat if they are interfered with.

Not until that party passes through a period of fasting in the wilderness will the Republican leaders learn to study public questions from the standpoint of the masses. Just as with individuals, "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the truth," so in politics, when party leaders serve far away from home and are not in constant contact with the voters, continued party success blinds their eyes to the needs of the people and makes them deaf to the cry of distress.

Publicity as to Campaign Contributions.

An effort has been made to secure legislation requiring publicity as to campaign contributions and expenditures; but the Republican leaders, even in the face of an indignant public, refuse to consent to a law which would compel honesty in elections. When the matter was brought up in the recent Republican National Convention, the plank was repudiated by a vote of 80 to 84. Here, too, Mr. Taft has

Striking Sentences from Mr. Bryan's Speech of Acceptance.

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SO far did the Republican convention fall short of its duty that the Republican candidate felt it necessary to add to his platform in several important particulars, thus rebuking the leaders of the party, upon whose co-operation he must rely for the enactment of remedial legislation.

SHALL the people control their own government, and use that government for the protection of their rights and for the promotion of their welfare? or shall the representatives of predatory wealth prey upon a defenseless public, while the offenders secure immunity from subversive officials whom they raise to power by unscrupulous methods? This is the issue raised by the "known abuses" to which Mr. Taft refers.

IS the President's indictment, (of the corporations) true? And, if true, against whom was the indictment directed? Not against the Democratic party. . . . Having drawn the salaries, having enjoyed the honors, having secured the prestige, let the Republican party accept the responsibility!

IF the past can be taken as a guide, the Republican party will be so obligated by campaign contributions from the beneficiaries of protection as to make that party powerless to bring to the country any material relief from the present tariff burdens.

PRIVILEGES have been pledged and granted in return for money contributed to defraud elections. What can be expected when official authority is turned over to the representatives of those who first furnish the sinews of war and then reimburse themselves out of the pockets of the taxpayers?

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MR. TAFT has been driven to apologize for his convention and to declare himself in favor of a publicity law; and yet, if you will read what he says upon this subject, you will find that his promise falls far short of the requirements of the situation.

HOW can the people hope to rule if they are not able to learn until after the election what the predatory interests are doing? The Democratic party meets the issue honestly and courageously.

NEXT to the corrupt use of money, the present method of electing United States Senators is most responsible for the obstruction of reforms.

ONLY those are worthy to be entrusted with leadership in a great cause who are willing to die for it, and the Democratic party has proven its worthiness by its refusal to purchase victory by delivering the people into the hands of those who have despoiled them.

WE may expect those who have committed larceny by law and purchased immunity with their political influence to attempt to raise false issues, and to employ "the livery of Heaven" to conceal their evil purposes, but they can no longer deceive.

THE Democratic party seeks not revolution, but reformation, and I need hardly remind the student of history that cures are mildest when applied at once; that remedies increase in severity as their application is postponed.

KNOWN ABUSES ARE CHARGED TO PARTY IN POWER

Has Failed to Keep Its Pledges on Important Questions—Popular Election of Senators.

porate interests. These Democratic national platforms—the platform of 1896, 1904, and 1908—specifically call for a change in the Constitution which will put the election senators in the hands of the voters, and the proposition has been endorsed by a number of the smaller parties, but no Republican National Convention has been willing to champion the cause of the people on the subject.

The subject was ignored by the Republican National Convention in 1900; it was ignored in 1904, and the proposition was explicitly repudiated in 1908. At the recent Republican National Convention, by a vote of 865 to 114, rejected the plank indorsing the popular election of Senators—and this was done by the convention which nominated Mr. Taft, few delegates from his own State voting for the plan.

Personal Inclination Not Sufficient.

In his notification speech the Republican candidate, speaking of the election of Senators by the people, says: "Personally, I am inclined to favor it, but it is hardly a party question." What is necessary to make this a party question? When the Democratic platform proposes the popular election by a unanimous vote, and the Republican convention rejects the proposition by a vote of seven to one, does it not become an issue between the parties? Mr. Taft cannot remove the question from the party platform by expressing a personal inclination toward the Democratic position. For several years he has been connected with the administration. What has he ever said or done to bring this question before the public? What enthusiasm has he shown in the reform? What of the Senate? What influence could he exert in behalf of a reform which his party has openly and notoriously condemned in its convention, and to which he is attached only by a belated expression of personal inclination?

The Gateway to Other Reforms.

"Shall the people rule?" Every remedial measure of a national character must run the gauntlet of the Senate. The President may personally incline toward a reform; the House may consent to it; but as long as the Senate obstructs the reform, the people must wait. The President may need a popular demand; the House may yield to public opinion; but as long as the Senate is defiant, the rule of the people is defeated. The Democratic platform very properly describes the popular election of Senators as "the gateway to other national reforms." Shall we open the gate, or shall we allow the exploiting interests to bar the way by the control of this body of corrupt Federal legislators. Through Democratic victory, and through a Democratic victory only, can the people secure the popular election of Senators. The smaller parties are unable to secure this reform; the Republican party, under its present leadership, is absolutely opposed to it; the Democratic party stands forth and has boldly demanded it. If I am elected to the presidency, those who are elected upon the ticket with me will be, like myself, pledged to this reform, and I shall convene Congress in extraordinary session immediately after inauguration, and ask, among other things, for the fulfillment of this platform pledge.

House Rules Despotism.

The third instrumentality employed to defeat the will of the people is found in the rules of the House of Representatives. These rules are so framed that "the House of Representatives was designed by the fathers of the Constitution to be the popular branch of our government, responsive to the public will, and adds: "The House of Representatives, as controlled in recent years by the Republican party, has ceased to be a deliberative and legislative body, responsive to the will of a majority of the members, but has come under the absolute domination of the Speaker, who has entire control of its deliberations and powers of legislation. "We have observed with amazement the popular branch of our Federal government helpless to obtain either the consideration or enactment of measures desired by a majority of its members."

This arraignment is fully justified. The reform Republicans in the House of Representatives, when in the minority, have been obliged to beg, or at least to obtain a hearing, or to secure a vote upon a measure as are the Democrats. In the recent session of the present Congress, there was a considerable element in the Republican party favorable to reform legislation, but a few leaders, in control of the organization despotically suppressed these members, and thus forced a real majority in the House to submit to a well-organized minority.

The Republican National Convention, instead of rebuking this attack upon popular government, eulogized Congress and nominated as the Republican candidate for Vice-President one of the men who shared in the responsibility for the degradation of the House. Our party demands that "the House of Representatives shall again become a deliberative body, controlled by a majority of the people's representatives, and not by the Speaker, and be pledged to adopt such rules and regulations to govern the House of Representatives as will enable a majority of its members to direct its deliberations and control legislation."

"Shall the people rule?" They cannot do so unless they can control the House of Representatives, and through their representatives in the House, give expression to their purposes and their desires. The Republican party is committed to the maintenance of the present rules in the House of Representatives; the Democratic party is pledged to such a revision of the rules as will bring the popular branch of the Federal government into harmony with the ideas of those who framed our Constitution and founded our government.

Other Issues Will Be Discussed Later.

"Shall the people rule?" I repeat, is declared by our platform to be the issue raised by the "known abuses" to which Mr. Taft refers.

(Continued on Fifth Page.)